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BITS OF  
BURNISHED GOLD

ROBERT BROWNING

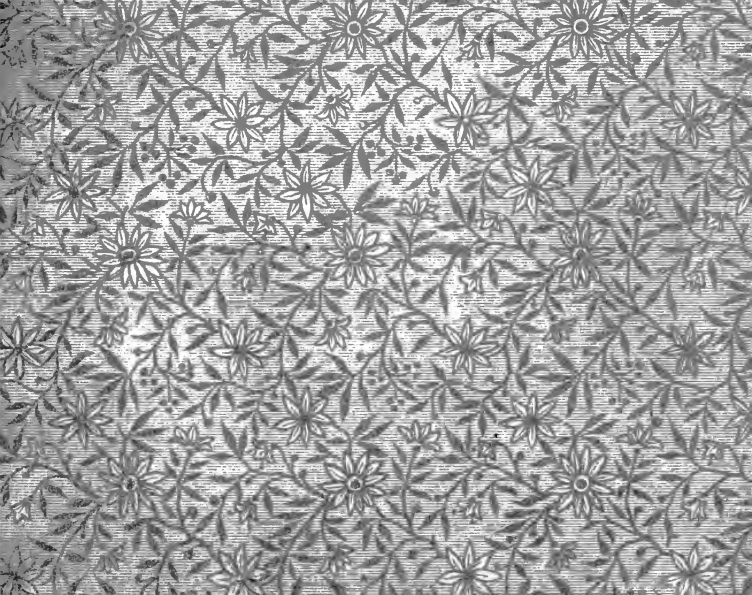


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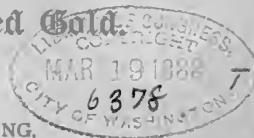








Bits of Burnished Gold.



ROBERT BROWNING.

"

COMPILED BY ROSE PORTER.

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**REMEMBER—**

*God gives each man one life, like a lamp, then gives  
That lamp due measure of oil; lamp lighted—hold high, wave wide  
Its comfort for others to share! Once quench it, what help is left?*

**B**



## A Paradox.

Welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go !  
Be our joys three-parts pain !  
Strive, and hold cheap the strain ;  
Learn, nor account the pang ; dare, never grudge the throe !  
For thence,—a paradox,  
Which comforts while it mocks,—  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail.

## Truth.

Truth is the strong thing. Let man's life be true.

---

Hear the truth, and bear the truth,  
And bring the truth to bear on all you are  
And do, assured that only good comes thence  
Whate'er the shape good takes.

---

Lie not ! Endure no lie which needs your heart  
And hand to push it out of mankind's path.

---

Weakness never needs be falseness ; truth is truth in each degree—  
Thunder-pealed by God to Nature, whispered by my soul to me.

## The Soul's Growth.

When the fight begins within himself,

A man's worth something.

. . . . The soul wakes

And grows. Prolong that battle through his life !

Never leave growing till the life to come.

---

What is left for us, save, in growth

Of soul to rise up . . . .

From the gift looking to the giver,

And from the cistern to the river,

And from the finite to infinity,

And from man's dust to God's divinity ?

## God accepts our Love.

God, who registers the cup  
Of mere cold water, for His sake  
To a disciple rendered up,  
Disdains not His own thirst to slake  
At the poorest love was ever offered :  
He suffers me to follow Him.  
. . . . To reach by prayer and praise  
The garment's hem, which, lo, I hold !

---

Take all in a word ; the truth in God's breast  
Lies trace for trace upon ours impressed ;  
Though He is so bright and we are so dim,  
We are made in His image to witness Him.

## A Soul's Warfare.

And so I live ; . . . .

Go through the world, try, prove, reject,

Prefer, still struggling to effect

My warfare ; happy that I can

Be crossed and thwarted as a man,

Not left in God's contempt apart,

With ghastly smooth life, dead at heart,

Tame in earth's paddock as her prize.

. . . . Thank God, no paradise stands barred

To entry.

. . . . Still every now and then my head

Raised glad, sinks mournful—all grows drear

Spite of the sunshine. . . . .

But Easter-Day breaks ! But

Christ rises ! Mercy every way

Is infinite. . . . .

## In God's Hand.

Love, we are in God's hand,  
How strange now looks the life He makes us lead ·  
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are !  
I feel He laid the fetter : let it lie !

---

My business is not to remake myself,  
But make the absolute best of what God made.

---

Wherever's will  
To do, there's plenty to be done.

---

To each who lives must be a certain fruit  
Of having lived in his degree.



## Soul and Body.

The soul is not the body ; and the breath is not the flute ;  
Both together make the music : either marred, and all is mute.

---

God, whose power made man and made man's wants, and made, to  
meet those wants,  
Heaven and earth which, through the body, prove the spirit's ministrants.

---

Life to come will be improvement on the life that's now : destroy  
Body's thwartings, there's no longer screen betwixt soul and soul's  
joy.

## Love.

Best love of all  
Is God's : then why not have God's love befall  
Myself ?

---

“ Love ”

Is a short word that says so very much !  
It says that you confide in me.

---

The Tower of Hate is outworn, far and strange :  
A transitory shame of long ago.  
It dies into the sand from which it sprang ;  
But thine, Love's rock-built Tower, shalt fear no change,  
God's self laid stable earth's foundations so,  
When all the morning-stars together sang.

## Envy.

Few of men this faculty is born with—  
Their friend, successful, without grudge to honor.

---

The being praised outrageously  
Is grave.

. . . . Therefore do I decide  
For so much and no more prosperity,  
Than of his envy passes unespied.

---

Ay, but the unenvied is not the much valued !

---

Good may lurk under the bad

## Hope.

I hope—no more than hope, but hope—no less than hope, because  
I can fathom, by no plumb-line sunk in life's apparent laws,  
How I may in any instance fix where change should meetly fall.

. . . . .

We know not—o'er our heaven again cloud closes, until, lo—  
Hope the arrowy, just as constant comes to pierce its gloom, com-  
pelled

By a power and by a purpose, which, if no one else beheld,  
I behold in life, so—hope !

## Saintly Souls.

Instances have been, and yet

Again may be, when saints, whose earthly ways  
Tend to perfection, very nearly get

To heaven while still on earth ; and, as a fine  
Interval shows where waters pure have met

Waves brackish, in a mixture, sweet with brine,  
That's neither sea nor river, but a taste  
Of both—so meet the earthly and divine.

---

Oh, never star  
Was lost here but it rose afar !

## One Moment.

One moment, one and infinite !  
The water slips o'er stock and stone ;  
The West is tender, hardly bright :  
How gray at once is the evening grown—  
One star, its chrysolite !

We two stood there with never a third,  
But each by each, we each knew well :  
The sights we saw and the sounds we heard,  
The lights and the shades made up a spell  
Till the trouble grew and stirred.

Oh, the little more, and how much it is !  
And the little less, and what worlds away !  
How a sound shall quicken content to bliss  
Or a breath suspend the blood's best play,  
And life be a proof of this !

## Hereafter.

God above

Is great to grant, as mighty to make,  
And creates the love to reward the love.

. . . . Go to sleep !

You will wake and remember, and understand.

---

Think, when our one soul understands  
The great Word which makes all things new,  
When earth breaks up and heaven expands,  
How will the change strike me and you  
In the house not made with hands ?

---

Love should be absolute love ; faith is in fulness or naught.

## Renewal.

True, I am worn ;

But who clothes summer, who is life itself ?

God, that created all things, can renew !

And then, though after-life to please me now

Must have no likeness to the past, what hinders

Reward from springing out of toil, as changed

As burst the flower from earth and root and stalk ?

---

Be sure that God

Ne'er dooms to waste the strength He deigns impart !

Be sure they sleep not whom God needs !



## Rest Remaineth.

There's a fancy some lean to and others hate—  
That, when this life is ended, begins  
New work for the soul in another state. . . .  
Yet I hardly know. When a soul has seen  
By the means of Evil that Good is best,  
And, through earth and its noise, what is heaven's serene—  
When our faith in the same has stood the test,—  
Why, the child grown man, you burn the rod,  
The uses of labor are surely done ;  
There remaineth a rest for the people of God ;  
And I have had trouble enough for one.

## Life.

Say, this life  
lead now, differs from the common life  
Of other men in mere degree, not kind,  
Of joys and griefs,—still there is such degree—  
Mere largeness in a life is something, sure—  
Enough to care about and struggle for,  
In this world : for this world, the size of things :  
The sort of things, for that to come, no doubt.  
A great is better than a little aim.

---

This first life claims a second, else I count its good no gain.

## Happiness.

How soon a smile of God can change the world !  
How we are made for happiness—how work  
Grows play, adversity a winning fight !

---

God, who meant  
I should ever be, as I am, content  
And glad in His sight : therefore glad I will be.

---

See ! stars are out—  
Stars which, unconscious of thy gaze beneath,  
Go glorying, and glorify thee too !

## The Reign of Law.

As with body so deals law with soul  
That's stung to strength through weakness, strives for good  
Through evil,—earth its race-ground, heaven its goal.

---

'Tis no fresh knowledge that I crave,  
Fuller truth yet, new gainings from the grave :  
Here we alive must needs deal fairly, turn  
To what account Man may Man's portion, learn  
Man's proper play with truth in part, before  
Entrusted with the whole.

---

After earth, comes peace  
Born out of life's-long battle.

## A Cry for Forgiveness.

God ! Thou art love ! I build my faith on that !  
. . . . So doth Thy right hand guide us through the world,  
Wherein we stumble. God ! what shall we say ?

. . . . He erred,——

Save him, dear God ; it will be like Thee : bathe him  
In light and life ! Thou art not made like us :  
We should be wroth in such a case : but Thou  
Forgivest.

---

Forgiveness ? rather grant  
Forgetfulness ! The past is past and lost.

## My Holiday.

Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest  
Me, . . . . old year's sorrow,  
Cast off last night, will come again to-morrow:  
Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall borrow  
Sufficient strength for the New-Year's sorrow. . . . .  
Thou art my single day, God leads to leaven  
What were all earth else, with *a feel of heaven*.

---

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flowing,  
Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help and good—  
Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming, going,  
As if earth turned from work in gamesome mood—  
All shall be mine !

## From Change to Change.

Nothing can be as it has been before ;  
Better, so call it, only not the same.  
To draw one beauty into our heart's core,  
And keep it changeless ! Such our claim ;  
So answered,—Nevermore !

Simple ? Why, this is the old woe o' the world :  
Tune, to whose rise and fall we live and die.  
Rise with it, then ! Rejoice that man is hurled  
From change to change unceasingly,  
His soul's wings never furled !

That's a new question : still replies the fact,  
Nothing endures ; the wind moans, saying so ;  
We moan in acquiescence : there's life's pact.  
Perhaps probation—do I know ?  
God does : endure His act !

## Earnest Work.

Knowing ourselves, our world, our task so great,  
Our time so brief, 'tis clear if we refuse  
The means so limited, the tools so rude  
To execute our purpose, life will fleet,  
And we shall fade, and leave our task undone.  
We will be wise in time : what though our work  
Be fashioned in despite of their ill-service,  
Be crippled every way ? 'Twere little praise  
Did full resource wait on our good-will  
At every turn ; Let all be as it is.



## Truth Within.

Truth is within ourselves ; it takes no rise  
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.  
There is an inmost centre in us all,  
Where truth abides in fulness ; and around  
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
This perfect, clear perception—which is truth,  
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
Blinds it, and makes all error ; and to *know*  
Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without.

## Sympathy.

'Tis mine—to boast no joy  
Unsobered by sorrows of my kind  
As sully with their shade my life that shines.  
Reflected possibilities of pain,  
Forsooth, just chasten pleasures ! Pain itself,—  
Fact and not fancy, does not this affect  
The general color ?

---

Pain's shade enhanced the shine  
Of pleasure, else no pleasure ! Such effects  
Came of such causes. Passage at an end—  
Past, present, future pains and pleasures fused  
To that one glance may gather blacks and whites  
Into a lifetime.

# Soul-Flight.

## I.

Good, to forgive ;  
Best, to forget !  
Living, we fret ;  
Dying, we live.  
Fretless and free,  
Soul, clap thy pinion !  
Earth have dominion,  
Body, o'er thee.

## II.

Soul that canst soar !  
Body may slumber ;  
Body shall cumber  
Soul-flight no more.

## III.

Waft of soul's wing !  
What lies above ?  
Sunshine and Love,  
Sky-blue and Spring  
Body hides—where ?

# Love Carries the Seed of Doubt.

## I.

Ah, Love, but a day,  
And the world has changed !  
The sun's away,  
And the bird estranged ;  
The wind has dropped,  
And the sky's deranged :  
Summer has stopped.

## II.

Look in my eyes !  
Wilt thou change too ?  
Should I fear surprise ?  
Shall I find aught new  
In the old and dear,  
In the good and true  
With the changing year ?

## Spiritual Insight.

Oh, we're sunk enough here, God knows !

But not quite so sunk that moments,  
Sure though seldom, are denied us,  
When the spirit's true endowments  
Stand out plainly from its false ones,  
And apprise it if pursuing  
Or the right way or the wrong way,  
To its triumph or undoing.

There are flashes struck from midnights,  
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,  
Whereby piled-up honors perish,  
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,  
While just this or that poor impulse  
Which for once had play unstifled,  
eems the sole work of a life-time  
That away the rest have trifled.

## Deaf and Dumb.

Only the prism's obstruction shows aright  
The secret of a sunbeam, breaks its light  
Into the jewelled bow from blankest white ;

So may a glory from defect arise :  
Only by Deafness may the vexed Love wreak  
Its insuppressive sense on brow and cheek ;  
Only by Dumbness adequately speak  
As favored mouth could never, through the eyes.

---

Love is born of heart, not mind.

## The Next Life.

What though, as on earth he darkly grovels, man descry the sphere,  
Next life's,—call it, heaven of freedom, close above and crystal clear ?  
He shall find—say, hell to punish who in aught curtails the term,  
Fain would act the butterfly, before he has played out the worm !  
God, soul, earth, heaven, hell,—five facts now : what is to de-  
siderate ?

Nothing ! Henceforth man's existence bows to the monition  
“ Wait ! ”

. . . . .  
'Tis next life that helps to learn—soon shall things be unperplexed,  
And the right and wrong, now tangled, lie unravelled in the next !

## Man's Work.

Study, my friends,  
What a man's work comes to ! So he plans it,  
Performs it, perfects it, makes amends  
For the toiling and moiling, and then, *sic transit* !  
Happier the thrifty blind-folk labor,  
With upturned eye while the hand is busy,  
Not sidling a glance at the coin of their neighbor !  
'Tis looking downward that makes one dizzy.  
. . . . .  
'Tis a life-long toil till our lump be leaven—  
The better ! What's come to perfection perishes.  
Things learned on earth we shall practise in heaven :  
Works done least rapidly, Art most cherishes.



## Desire for Heaven.

We all aspire to heaven : and there is heaven  
Above us : go there ! Dare we go ? no, surely !  
How dare we go without a reverent pause,  
A growing less unfit for heaven.

---

How perplexed  
Grows belief !  
Well, this cold clay clod  
Was man's heart :  
Crumble it, and what comes next ?  
Is it God ?

## The Wisdom of Age.

Ay, children, I am old—

. . . . A certain stage,

At least I reach, or dream I reach, where I discern  
Truer truths, laws behold more law-like than we learn  
When first we set our foot to tread the course I trod  
With man to guide my steps : who leads me now is God.  
The world lies under me : and nowhere I detect  
So great a gift as this—God's own—of human life.

‘ Shall the dead praise thee ? ’ No ! ‘ The whole world is rife,  
God with thy glory,’ rather ! Life, then, God's best of gifts,  
For what shall man exchange ?

## Wanting is—What ?

Wanting is—what ?

Summer redundant,

Blueness abundant,

—Where is the spot ?

Beamy the world, yet a blank all the same,

—Framework which waits for a picture to frame :

What of the leafage, what of the flower ?

Roses embowering with naught they embower !

Come, then, complete incompleteness, O comer,

Pant through the blueness, perfect the summer !

Breathe but one breath

Rose-beauty above,

And all that was death

Grows life, grows love.

Grows love !

## Memory.

What's the worst

Of Evil but that, past, it overshades  
The else-exempted present ?—memory,

We call the plague ! Nay, but our memory fades  
And leaves the past unsullied ! Does it so ?  
Why, straight the purpose of such breathing-space,  
Such respite from past ill, grows plain enough !  
What follows on remembrance of the past ?  
Fear of the future ? Life, from birth to death,  
Means—either looking back on harm escaped,  
Or looking forward to that harm's return  
With tenfold power of harming.

## Afterwards.

'Tis only when they spring to heaven that angels  
Reveal themselves to you : they sit all day  
Beside you, and lie down at night by you  
Who care not for their presence, muse or sleep,  
And all at once they leave you and you know then !

---

Death has done all death can,  
And, absorbed in the new life he leads,  
He recks not, he heeds  
Nor his wrong nor my vengeance ; both strike  
On his senses alike,  
And are lost in the solemn and strange  
Surprise of the change.

## My Star.

All that I know  
Of a certain star  
Is, it can throw  
(Like the angled spar)  
Now a dart of red,  
Now a dart of blue ;  
Till my friends have said  
They would fain see, too,  
My star that dartles the red and the blue !  
Then it stops like a bird : like a flower, hangs furled :  
They must solace themselves with the Saturn above it,  
What matter to me if their star is a world ?  
Mine has opened its soul to me : therefore I love it.

## Gratitude.

Eating my breakfast, I thanked God,—for love  
Shown in the cherries' flavor ? Consecrate  
So petty an example ? There's the fault !  
We circumscribe omnipotence. Search sand  
To unearth water : if first handful scooped  
Yields thee a draught, what need of digging down  
Full fifty fathoms deep to find a spring  
Whereof the pulse might deluge half the land ?  
Drain the sufficient drop.

. . . . .

Thank, praise, love  
For the lowest favors first,  
The commonest of comforts !

## Pain.

In the eyes of God

Pain may have purpose and be justified :

. . . . .

Put pain from out the world, what room were left

For thanks to God, for love to man ? Why thanks—

Except for some escape, whate'er the style,

From pain that might be, name it as thou mayest ?

. . . . .

Thanks to God

And love to man,—from man take these away,

And what is man worth ?



## Age.

What's a man's age ? He must hurry more, that's all ;  
Cram in a day what his youth took a year to hold ;  
When we mind labor, then only, we're too old.

---

The summer of life is so easy to spend,  
And care for to-morrow so soon put away !  
But winter hastens at summer's end.

---

If slow or fast,  
All struggle up to the same point at last.

---

Make nothing of my day because so brief ?  
Rather make more.

---

Ends accomplished turn to means.

## Failure and Success.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds ?  
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds ?  
. . . . All labor, yet no less  
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.  
Look at the end of work, contrast  
The petty done, the undone vast,  
This present of theirs with the hopeful past !  
. . . . .  
What hand and brain went ever paired ?  
What heart alike conceived and dared ?  
What act proved all its thought had been ?  
What will but felt the fleshy screen ?

## Great Works.

All great works in this world spring from the ruins  
Of greater projects—ever, on our earth  
Babels men block out, Babylons they build.

---

God's gift was that man should conceive of truth  
And yearn to gain it, catching at mistake,  
As midway help till he reach fact indeed.

---

Progress is the law of life.

---

What's whole, can increase no more,  
Is dwarfed and dies, since here's its sphere !

## Defeat.

Knowledge, the golden ?—lacquered ignorance !  
As gain—mistrust it ! Not as means to gain :  
Lacquer we learn by : cast in fining-pot,  
We learn, when what seemed ore assayed proves dross,—  
Surelier true gold's worth, guess how purity  
I' the lode were precious could one light on ore  
Clarified up to the test of crucible.  
The prize is in the process : knowledge means  
Ever-renewed assurance by defeat,  
That victory is somehow still to reach.  
But love is victory, the prize itself :  
Love—trust to ! Be rewarded for the trust  
In trust's mere act.

## Love's Law.

Why doubt a time succeeds

When each one may impart, and each receive.

. . . . .

What joy when each may supplement

The other, changing each, as changed, till, wholly blent,

The old things shall be new, and, what we both ignite,

Fuse, lose the varicolor in achromatic white !

Exemplifying law, apparent even now

In the eternal progress,—love's law, which I avow

And thus would formulate : each soul lives, longs, and works

For itself, by itself, because a lodestar lurks

An other than itself,—in whatso'er the niche

Of mistiest heaven it hide.

## Wisdom.

We must learn to live,  
Case-hardened at all points, not bare and sensitive,  
But plated for defence, nay, furnished for attack  
With spikes at the due place, that neither front nor back  
May suffer in that squeeze with Nature, we find—life.  
Are we not here to learn the good of peace through strife,  
Of love through hate, and reach knowledge through ignorance ?  
. . . . .  
And, not consequent upon the learning how from strife  
Grew peace—from evil, good—came knowledge that, to get  
Acquaintance with the ways o' the world, we must not fret  
Nor fume on altitudes of self-sufficiency,  
But bid a frank farewell to what—we think—should be,  
And with as good a grace, welcome what is,—we find.

## Art's Mission.

We're made so that we love  
First when we see them painted, things we have passed  
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see :  
And so they are better painted,—better to us,  
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that ;  
God uses us to help each other so,  
Lending our minds out.

---

The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,  
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life  
Provided it could be,—but, finding first  
What may be, then find how to make it fair  
Up to our means : a very different thing !

## The All-Great and All-Loving.

The very God ! think,—dost thou think ?  
So, the All-Great, even the All-Loving too—  
So, through the thunder comes a human voice,  
Saying, “ O heart I made, a heart beats here !  
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself !  
Thou hast no power, nor may'st conceive of mine,  
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,  
And thou must love me who have died for thee ! ”

---

Who knows most, doubts most ; entertaining hope,  
Means recognizing fear.



## The Earth's Resources.

The earth, God's ante-chamber !

. . . . .  
I stooped and picked a leaf of fern,  
And recollected I might learn  
From books, how many myriad sorts  
Of fern exist, to trust reports,  
Each as distinct and beautiful  
As this, the very first I cull.  
Think, from the first leaf to the last !  
Conceive, then, earth's resources ! Vast  
Exhaustless beauty, endless change of wonder !

---

God's work, be sure,  
No more spreads wasted, than falls scant !  
He filled, did not exceed, man's want  
Of beauty in this life.

## The Safe Side.

I'd take, by all means, in your place,  
The safe side, since it so appears :  
Deny myself, a few brief years,  
The natural pleasure, leave the fruit  
Or cut the plant up by the root.  
Remember what a martyr said,  
“ I was born sickly, poor and mean,  
A slave ; . . . .  
At last my own release was earned :  
I was some time in being burned,  
But at the close a Hand came through  
The fire above my head, and drew  
My soul to Christ, whom now I see.”

## War and Glory.

War for war's sake, war for the sake  
O' the good war gets you as war's sole excuse,  
Is damnable and damned shall be. You want  
Glory? Why, so do I, and so does God,  
Where is it found,—in this paraded shame,—  
One particle of glory? Once you warred  
For liberty against the world, and won;  
There was the glory:

. . . . .

I foresee and I announce  
Necessity of warfare in one case,  
For one cause; one way, I bid broach the blood  
O' the world. For truth and right, and only right  
And truth—right, truth, on the absolute scale of God,  
No pettiness of man's admeasurement.

## God's Help.

I—in ignorance and weakness,  
Taking God's help, have attained to think  
My heart does best to receive in meekness  
That mode of worship, as most to His mind,  
Where earthly aids being cast behind,  
His All in All appears serene  
With the thinnest human veil between,  
Letting the mystic lamps, the seven,  
The many motions of His Spirit,  
Pass, as they list, to earth from heaven.

---

What imports  
Fasting or feasting ? Do thy day's work, dare  
Refuse no help thereto, since help refused  
Is hindrance sought and found.

## Tolerance.

One trims the bark 'twixt shoal and shelf,  
And sees, each side, the good effects of it,  
A value for religion's self,  
A carelessness about the sects of it.  
Let me enjoy my own conviction,  
Nor watch my neighbor's faith with fretfulness,  
Still spying there some dereliction  
Of truth, perversity, forgetfulness !  
Better a mild indifferentism,  
Teaching that both our faiths (though duller  
His shines through a dull spirit's prism)  
Originally had one color !

## Love and Life.

Love which, on earth, amid all the shows of it,  
Has ever been seen the sole good of life in it,  
The love, ever growing there, spite of the strife in it,  
Shall arise, made perfect, from death's repose of it.  
And I shall behold Thee face to face,  
O God, and in Thy light retrace  
How in all I loved here, still wast Thou !  
Whom pressing to, then, as I fain would now,  
I shall find as able to satiate  
The love, Thy gift, as my spirit's wonder  
Thou art able to quicken and sublimiate.  
With this sky of Thine, that I now walk under,  
And glory in Thee for, as I gaze.

## Great and Little Minds.

For great minds i' the world  
There is no trial like the appropriate one  
Of leaving little minds their liberty  
Of littleness to blunder on through life,  
Now, aiming at right end by foolish means,  
Now, at absurd achievements through the aid  
Of good and wise means : trial to acquiesce  
In folly's life-long privilege—though with power  
To do the little minds the good they need,  
Despite themselves, by just abolishing  
Their right to play the part and fill the place  
I' the scheme of things He schemed who made alike  
Great minds and little minds, saw use for each.

## Always Onward.

What if I fail of my purpose here ?  
It is but to keep the nerves at strain,  
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,  
And baffled, get up and begin again,—  
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.  
While, look but once from your farthest bound  
At me so deep in the dust and dark,  
No sooner the old hope goes to ground,  
Than a new one, straight to the selfsame mark,  
I shape me—  
Ever  
Removed !



## Truth Golden.

Truth, truth, that's the gold ! and all the good  
I find in fancy is, it serves to set  
Gold's inmost glint free, gold which comes up rude  
And rayless from the mine—  
Always the ingot has its very own  
Value, a sparkle struck from truth alone.

---

Thou hast all gifts in one,  
With truth and purity go other gifts,  
All gifts come clustering to that.

---

To conjecture and “quite know” are two things.

## An Old Story.

Be very sure of this !

A twelvemonth hence and men shall know or care  
As much for what to-day they clap or hiss  
As for the fashion of the wigs they wear.

---

It was roses, roses all the way,  
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad :  
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,  
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had  
A year ago on this very day.

. . . . .  
There's nobody on the house-tops now—  
I go in the rain !

---

Oh, glory—gilded bubble, bard and sage  
So nickname rightly.

## Aspiration.

Somebody remarks

Morello's outline thus is wrongly traced,  
His hue mistaken ; what of that ? or else,  
Rightly traced and well ordered ; what of that ?  
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care ?  
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what's a heaven for ?—

. . . . .  
Incentives come from the soul's self.

. . . . .  
In this world, who can do a thing, will not ;  
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive ;  
Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the power—  
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,  
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.

## Night.

The night, late strewn with clouds and flying stars,  
Is blank and motionless : how peaceful sleep  
The tree-tops altogether ! Like an asp,  
The wind slips whispering from bough to bough.

---

That autumn eve was stilled :  
A last remains of sunset dimly burned  
O'er the far forests, like a torch-flame turned  
By the wind back upon its bearer's hand  
In one long flare of crimson : as a brand,  
The woods beneath lay black.

## The Dawn of Day.

Day !

Faster and more fast,  
O'er night's brim, day boils at last ;  
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim  
Where spurting and suppressed it lay ;  
For not a froth-flake touched the rim  
Of yonder gap in the solid gray  
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away ;  
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,  
Till the whole sun rise, not to be suppressed,  
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast  
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the world.

---

And the sun looked over the mountain's rim.

## The Voice of the Wind.

Hark, the Wind with its wants and its infinite wail !

---

Still ailing, Wind ? Wilt be appeased or no ?

. . . . .

I know not any tone

So fit as thine to falter forth a sorrow :

Dost think men would go mad without a moan,  
If they knew any way to borrow  
A pathos like thine own ?

---

— When the Wind begins among the vines,  
So low, so low, what shall it say but this ?  
“ Here is the change beginning, here the lines  
Circumscribe beauty, set to bliss  
The limit time assigns.”

## Constant Change.

Oh world, where all things pass and nought abides,  
Oh life, the long mutation—is it so ?  
Is it with life as with the body's change ?  
——Where—e'en though better follow, good must pass,  
Nor manhood's strength can mate with boyhood's grace,  
Nor age's wisdom, in its turn, find strength,  
But silently the first gift dies away,  
And though the new stays, never both at once.  
. . . . .  
The calm instructed eye of man holds fast  
By the sole bearing of the visible Star,  
Sure that when slow the whirling wreck subside  
The boundaries, lost now, shall be found again.

## Among the Mountains.

God's own profound  
Was above me, and round me the mountains,  
And under, the sea,  
And within me my heart to bear witness  
What was and shall be.  
Oh, heaven and the terrible crystal !  
No rampart excludes  
Your eye from the life to be lived  
In the blue solitudes.  
Oh, those mountains, their infinite movement !  
Still moving with you :  
For, ever some new head and breast of them  
Thrusts into view  
To observe the intruder.



# Among the Rocks.

## I.

Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,  
This autumn morning ! How he sets his bones  
To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees and feet  
For the ripple to run over in its mirth ;

Listening the while, where on the heap of stones  
The white breast of the sea-lark twitters sweet.

## II.

This is the doctrine, simple, ancient, true ;  
Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles and knows.  
If you loved only what were worth your love,  
Love were clear gain, and wholly well for you ;  
Make the low nature better by your throes !  
Give earth yourself, go up for gain above !

## A Love Song.

Such a starved bank of moss  
Till, that May-morn,  
Blue ran the flash across :  
Violets were born !

Sky—what a scowl of cloud  
Till, near and far,  
Ray on ray split the shroud ;  
Splendid, a star !

World—how it walled about  
Life with disgrace  
Till God's own smile came out ;  
That was thy face !

## Morning.

Morn is breaking—

The granite ridge pricks through the mist, turns gold  
As wrong turns right.

Morning's laugh sets all the crags alight  
Above the baffled tempest, tree and tree  
Stir themselves from the stupor of the night,  
And every strangled branch resumes its right  
To breathe, shake loose dark's clinging dregs, waves free  
In dripping glory. Prone the runnels plunge,  
While earth distent with moisture like a sponge,  
Smokes up, and leaves each plant its gem to see,  
Each grass-blade's glory-glitter.

## Spring.

One spring wind unbinds the mountain snow  
And comforts violets in their hermitage.

---

The woods were long austere with snow ; at last  
Pink leaflets budded on the beech, and fast  
Larches, scattered through pine-tree solitudes,  
Brightened, as in the slumbrous heart o' the woods  
Our buried year,—grew young again.

---

My own month came ;  
'Twas a sunrise of blossoming and May.

## Love Open-Eyed.

Nought blinds you less than admiration !  
Whether it be that all love renders wise  
In its degree : from love which blends with love—  
Heart answering heart—to love which spends itself  
In silent mad idolatry of some  
Pre-eminent mortal, some great soul of souls  
Which ne'er will know how well it is adored.  
I say, such love is never blind : but rather  
Alive to every minutest spot  
Which mars its object, and which hate (supposed  
So vigilant and searching) dreams not of,  
Love broods on such—— :  
True admiration blinds not.

## The True Estimate of Work.

It must often fall out  
That one whose labor perfects any work,  
Shall rise from it with eye so worn that he  
Of all men least can measure the extent  
Of what he has accomplished. He alone  
Who, nothing tasked, is nothing weary too,  
May clearly scan the little he effects :  
But we, the bystanders, untouched by toil,  
Estimate each aright.

---

The polisher needs precious stones no less  
Than precious stones need polisher.

## The Best.

"Ah, Soul," the Monarch sighed, that would'st soar, yet ever crawlest,  
"How comes it thou canst discern the greatest, yet choose the  
smallest,

Unless because heaven is far, where wings find fit expansion,  
While creeping on all-fours suits, suffices the earthly mansion ?  
Aspire to the Best ! But which ? There are Bests and Bests so  
many,

With a *habitat* each for each, earth's Best as much Best as any !  
On Lebanon roots the cedar—soil lofty, yet stony and sandy—  
While hyssop of worth in its way, on the wall grows low but handy.

## The Soul's Voice.

I report, as a man may of God's work—all's love, yet all's law. Each  
faculty tasked

To perceive Him, has gained an abyss where a dewdrop was asked.

Have I knowledge ? confounded it shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.

Have I forethought ? how purblind, how blank, to the Infinite Care !

Do I task any faculty highest, to image success ?

I but open my eyes,—and perfection, no more and no less,

In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me, and God is seen God

In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, and the clod.

And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew

(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it too)

The submission of man's nothing-perfect to God's all-complete,

As by each new obeisance in spirit, I climb to His feet.



## A Happy Temper.

Luitolfo was the proper  
Friend-making, everywhere friend-finding soul,  
Fit for the sunshine, s't followed him.  
A happy-tempered bringer of the best  
Out of the worst ; who bears with what's past cure,  
And puts so good a face on 't—wisely passive,  
Where action's fruitless, while he remedies  
In silence what the foolish rail against ;  
A man to smooth such natures as parade  
Of opposition must exasperate ;

. . . . .

One who won't forego  
The after-battle work of binding wounds.

## Questions.

The old misgivings, crooked questions are—  
This good God,—what He could do, if He would,  
Would, if He could—then must have done long since :  
If so, when, where, and how ? Some way must be,—  
Once feel about, and soon or late you hit  
Some sense, in which it might be, after all.  
Why not, “ The Way, the Truth, the Life ? ”

. . . . .  
That way  
Over the mountain, which who stands upon  
Is apt to doubt if it be indeed a road.

. . . . .  
What’s a break or two ?

. . . . .  
What if the breaks themselves should prove at last  
The most consummate of contrivances  
To train a man’s eye, teach him what is faith ?  
And so we stumble at truth’s very test !

## Faith.

I absolutely and peremptorily  
Believe !—I say, faith is my waking life :  
One sleeps, indeed, and dreams at intervals,  
We know, but waking's the main point with us,  
And my provision's for life's waking part.  
Accordingly, I use heart, head, and hand  
All day, I build, scheme, study, and make friends ;  
And when night overtakes me, down I lie,  
Sleep, dream a little, and get done with it,  
The sooner the better, to begin afresh.  
What's midnight doubt before the day's faith ?

---

The world and life's too big to pass for a dream.

## Faith and Doubt.

You call for faith :

I show you doubt, to prove that faith exists ;  
The more of doubt, the stronger faith, I say,  
If faith o'ercomes doubt. How I know it does ?  
By life and man's free will, God gave for that !  
To mould life as we choose it, shows our choice ;  
That's our one act, the previous work's His own.

. . . . .

The sum of all is—yes, my doubt is great,  
My faith's still greater, then my faith's enough.

## Individuality.

Speak not against your nature : but each keep  
His own——

God's finger marks distinctions, all so fine,  
We would confound : the lesser has its use  
Which, when it apes the greater, is foregone.

---

Knowledge and powers have rights,  
But ignorance and weakness have rights too.

---

I've heard, great characters require a fall  
Of fortune to show greatness by up-rise.  
*They touch the ground to jollily rebound.*

## A Maiden's Heart.

Her beauty is not strange to you—  
You cannot know the good and tender heart,  
Its girl's trust and its woman's constancy,  
How pure yet passionate, how calm yet kind,  
How grave yet joyous, how reserved yet free  
As light where friends are—how imbued with lore  
The world most prizes, yet the simplest, yet  
The . . . .

In a word,

Control's not for this lady ; but her wish  
To please me outstrips in its subtlety  
My power of being pleased : herself creates  
The want the means to satisfy.

## Greatness Charactered by Unconsciousness.

How plainly is true greatness charactered  
By . . . . unconscious sport. . . . .  
Strength sharing least the secret of itself !  
Be it with head that schemes or hand that acts,  
Such save the world which none but they could save,  
Yet think whate'er they did, that world could do.  
Yes : and how worthy note, that these same great ones  
In hand or head, with such unconsciousness  
And all its due entailed humility  
Should never shrink, so far as I perceive,  
From taking up whatever tool there be  
Effects the whole world's safety or mishap,  
Into their mild hands as a thing of course !

## Life.

How the world is made for each of us !

How all we perceive and know in it  
Tends to some moment's product thus,  
When a soul declares itself—to wit,  
By its fruit, the thing it does !

Be hate that fruit or love that fruit,  
It forwards the general deed of man,  
And each of the Many helps to recruit  
The life of the race by a general plan !  
Each living his own, to boot.

I am named and known by that moment's feat :  
There took my station and degree :  
So grew my own small life complete,  
As nature obtained her best of me—

. . . . .  
So, earth has gained by one man the more,  
And the gain of earth must be heaven's gain too.



## Life's Lesson.

Our life is lent,  
From first to last, the whole, for this experiment  
Of proving—that we ourselves are true !

---

Life means—learning to abhor  
The false, and love the true, truth treasured snatch by snatch,  
Waifs counted at their worth. And when with strays they match  
I' the particolored world—when, under foul, shines fair,  
And truth, displayed i' the point, flashes forth everywhere  
I' the circle, manifest to soul, though hid from sense,  
And no obstruction more affects this confidence,—  
When faith is ripe for sight—why, reasonably, then  
Comes the great clearing-up. Wait threescore years and ten !

## The Value of a Minute.

A minute's success pays the failure of years.

---

I pluck the rose  
And love it more than tongue can speak—  
Then the good minute goes  
Already how am I so far  
Out of that minute ?

---

Think, as if man had never thought before !  
Act, as if all creation hung attent  
On the acting of such faculty as thine  
To take prime pattern from thy masterpiece.

## Nothing Lost.

To whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable Name ?  
Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands !  
What, have fear of change from Thee who art ever the same ?  
Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart that Thy power expands ?  
There shall never be one lost good ! what was, shall live as before :  
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound :  
What was good, shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more,  
On earth the broken arcs : in the heaven a perfect round.  
All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist :  
Not its semblance, but itself ; . . . .

. . . . .  
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,  
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard ;  
Enough that He heard it once : we shall hear it by and by.

## Triumph through Failure.

What is our failure here, but a triumph's evidence  
For the fulness of the days ? . . . .

Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized ?  
Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,  
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal or woe :  
But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear. . . . .

---

I looked beyond the world for truth and beauty,  
Sought, found, and did my duty.

---

Every joy is gain,  
And gain is gain, however small.

## The Dawn of the Year.

Here comes gay New-Year with a gift, no doubt !  
Look up and let in light that longs to shine—  
One flash of light, and where will darkness hide ?

---

The year's at the spring  
And day's at the morn ;  
Morning's at seven !  
The hillside's dew-pearled ;  
The lark's on the wing !  
The snail's on the thorn :  
God's in His heaven—  
All's right with the world !

## The Test.

Death reads the title clear—

What each soul for itself conquered from out things here :  
Since, in the seeing soul, all worth lies, I assert,—  
And nought i' the world, which, save for soul that sees, inert  
Was, is, and would be ever,—stuff for transmuting,—null  
And void until man's breath evoke the beautiful—  
But, touched aright, prompt yields each particle, its tongue  
Of elemental flame—no matter whence flame sprung  
From gums and spice, or else from straw and rottenness,  
So long as soul has power to make them burn, express  
What lights and warms henceforth.

## Glory Once.

No creature's made so mean  
But that, some way, it boasts, could we investigate  
Its supreme worth ; fulfils, by ordinance of fate,  
Its momentary task, gets glory all its own,  
Tastes triumph in the world, pre-eminent, alone.  
Where is the single grain of sand, 'mid millions heaped  
Confusedly on the beach, but, did we know, has leaped  
Or will leap, would we wait, i' the century, some once,  
To the very throne of things ?—earth's brightest for the nonce,  
When sunshine shall impinge on just that grain's facette  
Which fronts him fullest, first, returns his ray with jet  
Of promptest praise, thanks God best in creation's name.

## One Law for All.

Least, largest, there's one law for all the minds,  
Here or above ; be true at any price !

---

The lowest, on true grounds,  
Is worth more than the highest rule on false :  
Aspire to rule on the true grounds.

---

So absolutely good is truth, truth never hurts  
The teller, whose worst crime gets somehow grace, avowed.

---

Ay, God remains  
Even did men forsake you. . . . .  
Were 't not for God, what hope of truth—  
Speaking truth, living truth, would stay with me ?



## Resolve.

I had a noble purpose, and the strength  
To compass it : but I have stopped half-way,  
And wrongly given the first-fruits of my toil  
To objects little worthy of the gift.  
Why linger round them still ? why clench my fault ?  
Why seek for consolation in defeat,  
In vain endeavors to derive a beauty  
From ugliness ? Why seek to make the most  
Of what no power can change, nor strive instead  
With mighty effort to redeem the past  
And, gathering up the treasure thus cast down  
To hold a steadfast course till I arrive  
At their fit destination and my own ?

## Concerning Life.

“ Time fleets, youth fades, life is an empty dream.”

It is the echo of time ; and he whose heart  
Beat first beneath a human heart, whose speech  
Was copied from a human tongue, can never  
Recall when he was living, yet knew not this.  
Nevertheless long seasons pass o'er him  
Till some one hour's experience shows what nothing,  
It seemed, could clearer show ; and ever after  
An altered brow and eye and gait and speech  
Attest that now he knows the adage true,

“ Time fleets, youth fades, life is an empty dream.”

## Pippa's Song.

Overhead the tree-tops meet,  
Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet ;  
There was nought above me, nought below,  
My childhood had not learned to know ;  
For, what are the voices of birds—  
Ay, and of beasts,—but words, our words,  
Only so much more sweet ?  
The knowledge of that with my life begun,  
But I had so near made out the sun,  
And counted your stars, the seven and one,  
Like the fingers of my hand ;  
Nay, I could all but understand  
Wherefore through heaven the white moon ranges,  
And just when out of her soft fifty changes  
No unfamiliar face might overlook me—  
Suddenly God took me.

## Womanly Loveliness.

There is a vision in the heart of each  
Of justice, mercy, wisdom, tenderness,  
To wrong and pain, and knowledge of its cure ;  
And these embodied in a woman's form  
That best transmits them, pure as first received,  
From God above her, to mankind below.

---

Michal's face

Still wears that quiet and peculiar light  
Like the dim circlet floating round a pearl !

## Life Beyond.

Only grant a second life : I acquiesce  
In this present life as failure, count misfortune's worst assaults  
Triumph, not defeat, assured that loss so much the more exalts  
Gain about to be.

. . . . .  
Only grant my soul may carry high through death her cup unspilled  
Brimming though it be with knowledge, life's loss drop by drop  
distilled,  
I shall boast it mine—the balsam, bless each kindly wretch that  
wrung  
From life's tree its inmost virtue, tapped the root whence pleasure  
sprung,  
Barked the bole, and broke the bough, and bruised the berry, left  
all grace  
Ashes in death's stern alembic, loosed elixir in its place.

## Music.

Music (which is earnest of a heaven,  
Seeing we know emotions strange by it,  
Not else to be revealed) is as a voice,  
A low voice calling fancy, as a friend,  
To the green woods in the gay summer time ;  
And she fills all the way with dancing shapes  
Which have made painters pale, and they go on  
While stars look at them and winds call to them  
As they leave life's path for the twilight world  
Where the dead gather.

---

Music waits on a lyrist for some thought,  
Yet singing to herself until it came.

## From Earth to Heaven,

God must be glad one loves His world so much.  
I can give news of earth to all the dead  
Who ask me :—last year's sunsets, and great stars  
That had a right to come first and see ebb  
The crimson wave that drifts the sun away—  
Those crescent moons with notched and burning rims  
That strengthened into sharp fire, and there stood  
Impatient of the azure—and that day  
In March, a double rainbow stopped the storm—  
May's warm slow yellow moonlit summer nights—  
Gone are they, but I have them in my soul !

## Progress.

What were life

Did soul stand still therein, forego her strife  
Through the ambiguous Present to the goal  
Of some all-reconciling Future ? Soul,  
Nothing has been which shall not bettered be  
Hereafter,—leave the root, by law's decree  
Whence springs the ultimate and perfect tree !  
Busy thee with unearthing root ? Nay, climb—  
Quit trunk, branch, leaf, and flower—reach, rest sublime  
Where fruitage ripens in the blaze of day !  
O'erlook, despise, forget, throw flower away  
Intent on progress.

. . . . .  
Do, and nowise dream !



## Man's Life.

'Tis willed so,—that Man's life be lived first to last,  
Up and down, through and through,—not in portions, forsooth,  
To pick and to choose from. Our shuttles fly fast,  
Weave living, not life sole and whole : as age—youth,  
So death completes living, shows life in its truth.

---

'Tis not what man *does* which exalts him, but what man *would* do !

---

Thought is the soul of act.

---

Would you have your songs endure ?  
Build on the human heart.

## The Potter's Wheel.

All I could never be,  
All, men ignored in me,  
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.  
Ay, note that Potter's wheel,  
That metaphor ! and feel  
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay.—

. . . . .  
Look not thou down but up !  
To uses of a cup.

. . . . .  
My times be in Thy hand !  
Perfect the cup as planned !



## Love's Way.

Such was ever love's way : to rise, it stoops.

. . . . .

Life, with all it yields of joy or woe,

And hope and fear,—

Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love.

How love might be, hath been indeed, and is ;

And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost

Such prize despite the envy of the world,

And, having gained truth, keep truth : that is all.

---

To truth add other truth.

Why with old truths need new truth disagree ?

## Growth.

I say that man was made to grow, not stop ;  
That help, he needed once, and needs no more,  
Having grown but an inch by, is withdrawn :  
For he hath new needs, and new helps to these.  
This imports solely, man should mount on each  
New height in view : the help whereby he mounts,  
The ladder-rung his foot has left, may fall,  
Since all things suffer change save God the Truth.  
Man apprehends Him newly at each stage  
Whereat earth's ladder drops, its service done :  
And nothing shall prove twice what once was proved.

## Mountain Climbing.

Dared and done ; at last I stand upon the summit,  
Singly dared and done. . . . .

Petty feat and yet prodigious : every side my glance was bent  
O'er the grandeur and the beauty lavished through the whole ascent.  
Ledge by ledge, out broke new marvels now minute and now  
immense :

Earth's most exquisite disclosure, heaven's own God in evidence !  
And no berry in its hiding, no blue space in its outspread  
Pleaded to escape my footstep— . . . .

Now built round by rock and boulder, now at just a turn set free,  
Stationed face to face with—Nature ? rather with Infinitude,

## Sleeping and Waking.

The mesmerizer Snow  
With his hand's first sweep  
Puts the earth to sleep.

---

Thou wilt remember one warm morn when winter  
Crept aged from the earth, and spring's first breath  
Blew soft from the moist hills ; the black-thorn boughs,  
So dark in the bare wood, when glistening  
In the sunshine were white with coming buds,  
Like the bright side of a sorrow, and the banks  
Had violets opening from sleep like eyes.

## No Last nor First.

There is no last nor first.

Say not "a small event!" Why "small"?

Costs it more pain than this, ye call

A "great event," should come to pass,

Than that? Untwine me from the mass

Of deeds which make up life, one deed

Power shall fall short in or exceed!

---

We garland us, we mount from earth to feed in heaven,

Just because exists what once we estimated

Hindrances which, better taught, as help we now compute.

## Good and Evil.

Whisper me

' Dost thou curse God for granting twelve years' bliss

Only to prove this day's the direr lot ? '

Whereon the beggar raised a brow, once more

Luminous and imperial, from the rags.

' Fool, does thy folly think my foolishness

Dwells rather on the fact that God appoints

A day of woe to the unworthy one,

Than that the unworthy one, by God's award

Tasted joy twelve years long ? '

. . . . .

Shall we receive good at the hand of God

And evil not receive ?



## Love's Guidance.

You groped your way across my room i' the drear dark of night ;  
At each fresh step a stumble was ; but once your lamp alight,  
Easy and plain you walked again : so soon all wrong grew right !  
What lay on floor to trip your foot ? Each object, late awry,  
Looked fitly placed, nor proved offence to footing free—for why ?  
The lamp showed all, discordant late, grown simple symmetry.  
Be love your light and trust your guide, with these explore my heart !  
No obstacle to trip you then, strike hands and souls apart !  
Since rooms and hearts are furnished so,—light shows you,—needs  
love start ?

## God in all Things.

O Thou, the one force in the whole variation  
Of visible nature—at work—do I doubt ?  
From Thy first to our last, in perpetual creation—  
A film hides us from Thee—'twixt inside and out,  
A film on this earth where Thou bringest about  
New marvels, new forms of the glorious, the gracious,  
We bow to, we bless for : no star bursts heaven's dome  
But Thy finger impels it, no weed peeps audacious  
Earth's clay-floor from out, but Thy finger makes room  
For one world's-want the more in Thy Cosmos.

## From "Saul."—David's Harp Tunes.

### FIRST TUNE.

I tuned my harp,—took off the lilies we twine round its chords  
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noontide—those sunbeams  
like swords !

And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one after one,  
So docile they come to the pen-door till folding be done.

They are white and untorn by the bushes, for lo, they have fed  
Where the long grasses stifle the water within the stream's bed :  
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star follows star  
Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue and so far !

## SECOND TUNE.

Then the tune, for which quails on the cornland will each leave his  
mate

To fly after the player ; then, what makes the crickets elate  
Till for boldness they fight one another : and then, what has weight  
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand-house—  
There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and half mouse !  
God made all the creatures and gave them our love and cur fear,  
To give sign, we and they are His children, one family here.

### THIRD TUNE.

Then I played the help-tune of our reapers, their wine-song, when  
hand

Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and great hearts  
expand

And grow one in the sense of this world's life—and then, the last  
song

When the dead man is praised on his journey—"Bear, bear him  
along

With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets!"

. . . . .

And then, the glad chaunt of the marriage.

. . . . .

And then, the great march

Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress an arch

Nought can break. . . . .

## FOURTH TUNE.

Once more the string of my harp made response to my spirit, as thus—

Each deed thou hast done

Dies, revives, goes to work in the world : until e'en as the sun

Looking down on the earth, though clouds spoil him, though tem-  
pests efface,

Can find nothing his own deed produced not, must everywhere trace

The results of his past summer-prime,—so, each ray of thy will,

Every flash of thy passion and prowess, long over, shall thrill

Thy whole people the countless, with ardor, till they too give forth

A like cheer to their sons, who in turn, fill the South and the North!

With the radiance thy deed was the germ of.

## One Gift.

'Tis Thou, God, that givest, 'tis I who receive.

In the first is the last, in Thy will is my power to believe,

All's one gift ; Thou canst grant it moreover, as prompt to my prayer

As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms to the air.

As Thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved

Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being Beloved !

He who did most, shall bear most ; the strongest shall stand the  
most weak.

'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for ! My flesh, that I seek

In the Godhead ! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be

A Face like my face that receives thee, a Man like to me

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever ! a Hand like this hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee ! See the Christ stand !

## Home Thoughts, from Abroad.

Oh, to be in England

Now that April's there.

. . . . .  
And after April, when May follows

And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows !

Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge

Leans to the field and scatters on the clover .

Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—

That's the wise thrush ; he sings each song twice over,

Lest you should think he never could recapture

The first fine careless rapture !

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,

All will be gay when noontide wakes anew

The buttercups, the little children's dower.



## The Last Fight.

One fight more,  
The best and the last !  
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,  
And bade me creep past :  
No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers  
The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
Of pain, darkness and cold.  
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest !

# Ben Karshook's Wisdom.

## I.

"Would a man 'scape the rod?"

Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,

"See that he turn to God  
The day before his death."

"Ay, could a man inquire  
When it shall come!" I say,  
The Rabbi's eye shoots fire—  
"Then let him turn to-day!"

## II.

Quoth a young Sadducee :

"Reader of many rolls,  
Is it so certain we  
Have, as they tell us, souls?"

"Son, there is no reply!"  
The Rabbi bit his beard :

"Certain, a soul have I—  
*We* may have none," he sneered.

## Why I am a Liberal.

Why ? Because all I haply can and do,  
All that I am now, all I hope to be,—  
Whence comes it save from fortune setting free  
Body and soul the purpose to pursue,  
God traced for both ? If fetters, not a few,  
Of prejudice, convention, fall from me,  
These shall I bid men—each in his degree,  
Also God-guided—bear, and gayly too ?

But little do or can the best of us ;  
That little is achieved through Liberty.

Who then, dares hold, emancipated thus—  
His fellow shall continue bound ? Not I,  
Who live, love, labor, freely, nor discuss  
A brother's right to freedom. That is " why."

## Golden Nuggets.

What use were punishment, unless some sin  
Be first detected ?

---

Shutting out fear with all the strength of hope.

---

The great mind knows the power of gentleness.

---

He looked at her, as a lover can ;  
She looked at him, as one who awakes :  
The past was a sleep, and her life begun.

Mankind are not pieces . . . .  
You cannot push them, and, the first move made,  
Lean back and study what the next shall be.

---

Genius has somewhat of the infantine.  
But of the childish, not a touch nor taint.

---

They forget no crowd  
Makes up for parents in the shroud !

---

The night shuts the woodside with all its whispers up.

---

When the devil stabs . . . .  
He stabs for the minute of trivial wrong,  
Nor the other hours are able to save.

Flower and man,  
Let each assume that scent and hue alike  
Being once born, must needs have use ! Man's part  
Is plain, to send love forth—astray perhaps,  
No matter, he has done his part.

---

Who goes gleaning  
Hedge-side chance-blades, while full-sheaved  
Stand corn-fields by him ?

---

The city's congregated peace of homes and pomp of spires,  
—Man's mild protest that there's something more than  
Nature man requires.

“ Heigho !” yawned one day King Francis,  
Distance all value enhances !  
When a man’s busy, why, leisure  
Strikes him as wonderful pleasure :  
Faith, and at leisure once is he ?  
Straightway he wants to be busy.

---

The valley-land has its hawks, no doubt :  
May not the rock-top have its eagles, too ?

---

Will the wronger, at the last of all,  
Dare to say, “ I did wrong,” rising in his fall ?

---

Whom vanity nigh slew, contempt shall save !

---

Deeds let escape are never to be done.

No doubt, men vastly differ : and we need  
Some strange exceptional benevolence  
Of nature's sunshine to develop seed  
So well, in the less-favored clime, that thence  
We may discern how shrub means tree indeed  
Though dwarfed till scarcely shrub is evidence.  
Man in the in-house and the hot-house ranks  
With beasts or gods : stove-forced, give warmth the thanks !

---

A mother who boasts two boys was ever accounted rich.

---

Gold's gold though dim in the dust ; court-polish soon turns it yellow.

---

Words break no bones !  
Hearts, though, sometimes.



Who are we to spurn  
For peace' sake, duty's pointings ? Up, then—earn  
Albeit no prize we may but martyrdom !  
Now, such fit height to launch salvation from  
How get and gain ? Since help must needs be craved  
By would-be saviors of the else unsaved,  
How coax them to co-operate, lend lift,  
Kneel down and let us mount ?

---

A word, how it severeth !  
Oh, power of life and death  
In the tongue, as the Preacher saith !

---

Feet, feelings, must descend the hill :  
An hour's perfection can't recur !

'Tis we wish steadiness ;  
Nature prefers a motion by unrest,  
Advancement through the force that jostles that.

---

You can but crown the brim  
O' the cup ; if it be full, what matter less or more ?

---

Our sky was overcast,  
And something fell ; but day clears up, if there chanced rain,  
The landscape glistens more.

---

Like a moon  
Out-breaking from a cloud, to put harsh things in tune.

Home !—where lives joy,  
The cure, at once and ever, of world and world's annoy.

---

Could he look above,  
With less of the owl, and more of the eagle eye,  
He'd see there's no way helps the little cause  
Like the attainment of the great.

---

You're my friend—  
What a thing friendship is, world without end !  
How it gives the heart and soul a stir-up !

---

Why stay we on the earth unless to grow ?

There's many a crown for who can reach.

---

More relaxed grows every one who fares well.

---

'Tis for the doer to plan of the deed.

---

It suits not to defile a day auspicious  
With ill-announcing speech.

---

Who, God's excepted,  
Goes, through the whole time of his life ungrieving ?

---

One can't tear out one's heart,  
And show it, how sincere a thing it is.

---

I smiled as one never smiles but once.

The great  
For pleasure born, should still be on the watch  
To exclude pleasure when a duty offers,  
Even as for duty born, the lowly too  
May ever snatch a pleasure if in reach,  
Both will have plenty of their birthright !

---

The Future—that's  
Our destination, mists turn rainbows there  
Which sink to fog, confounded in the flats  
O' the Present ! Day's the song-time for the lark,  
Night for her music boasts but owls and bats,  
And what's the Past but night !











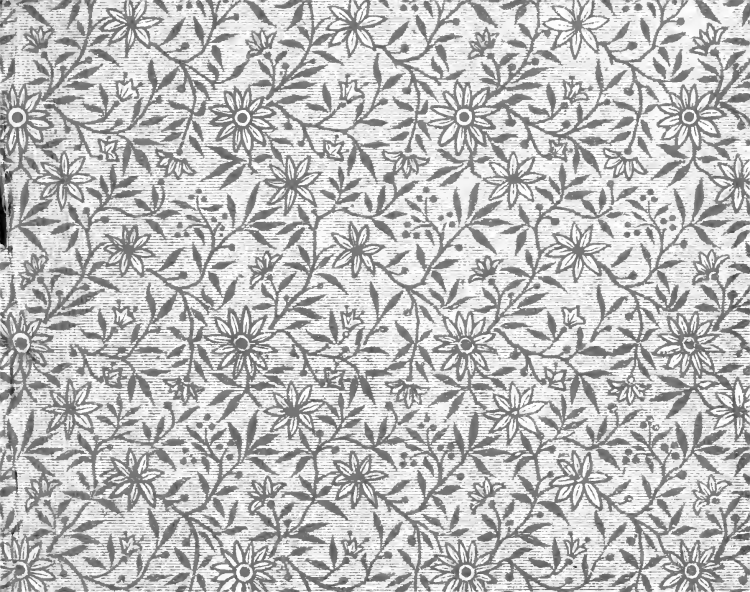


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